

## The Lord's Day

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The beloved disciple had been banished to the isle of Patmos “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Just when this took place is not known with positive certainty, but it was certainly many years after the ascension of Christ. While there he had wonderful visions, and this is how he begins the account of them. “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice.” Revelation 1.10

From this we know that there was a certain day known at that time as the Lord's day, and that John, as a faithful follower of Christ, observed it. We also know that if the Lord had a special day for His own then, He must have it still. Let us see if we can find out what day it is. The only place where we can surely find it is the Bible.

In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah we find the Lord's day mentioned in those words: “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Isaiah 58.13, 14

Here the day which the Lord Himself calls, “My holy day,” is “the Sabbath!” Now what day is the Sabbath? The Lord Himself tells us this, also: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.” Exodus 20.8-10

It is plain that the Sabbath—the seventh day—is the same day that in Isaiah is called by the Lord, “My holy day.” With these two texts alone we have found that the Lord's day is the Sabbath—the seventh day of the week. Therefore the day on which John was in the Spirit, and received visions from God, was the seventh day, the Sabbath. Thus, to put the matter into compact form: The seventh day is the Sabbath; it is the Sabbath of the Lord; it is a holy day, and is to be kept holy; the Lord Himself calls it “My holy day.” John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day; therefore John was in the Spirit on the Sabbath day.

We have further evidence. At one time Jesus and His disciples went on the Sabbath day through the corn; and His disciples being hungry began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. The Pharisees, who were ever on the watch to find something against Jesus, accused His disciples of breaking the Sabbath. There can be no question as to what day of the week this was, for the Pharisees observed the seventh day of the week strictly, that is, in outward form. So when they said, “Behold, Thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day,” they had reference only to the seventh day. This is of value, incidentally, as showing what day of the week is called the Sabbath day in the New Testament.

But Jesus would not allow that His disciples had done wrong in plucking and eating corn on the Sabbath day. Still later, on that same day, when about to heal a man, He said, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." To the Pharisees He said, in defending His disciples from the false charge of Sabbath-breaking: "If ye had known what this means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Matthew 12.7, 8

Since it was the seventh day that the Pharisees professed to keep, and which they charged the disciples with breaking, it was of the seventh day that Jesus declared Himself to be the Lord. For "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." How did Jesus come to be Lord of the seventh-day Sabbath? —By making it, and setting it apart for man's use. Thus, after the account of the six days of creation, we read: —

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Genesis 2.1-3. The One who created was the One who rested on the seventh day, and the Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things, as we read in John 1.1–3; Colossians 1.12-17, and many other places.

Christ is the Lord of the seventh-day Sabbath, therefore, by virtue of His being Creator. He says of His people, "I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ezekiel 20.12. So, the Sabbath is a sign that in Christ as Creator we have "wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." Consequently the Sabbath must endure as long as the facts of creation endure; as long as it is a fact that Christ is Creator, and that He has power to redeem. Hear His words on this point: —

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matthew 5.17, 18

"And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16.17

And though the present heaven and earth pass, they will be created new, and the promise is: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 66.22, 23